

# Transition Career Exploration Workshop Disabilities and Accommodations



The Transition Career Exploration Workshop is a product of the Maine Department of Labor. The ND Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has permission to add the ND DVR brand to all information.



### Facilitator Notes:

**LEARNING OBJECTIVE:** In this section, participants will learn about acknowledging and disclosing disabilities, as well as the broad extent and incidence of people with disabilities .

This will introduce the section on Acknowledging Disabilities.

Give participants time to look at all the Clip-Art depictions of people with disabilities.

## Disabilities – What's Missing?



3

### Facilitator Notes:

Have them look at this slide and then ask, “What disabilities are missing?”

This is leading to a conversation about invisible and acquired disabilities.

## Invisible and Acquired Disabilities

- Invisible Disabilities
  - Learning Disabilities
  - Intellectual (Developmental) Disabilities
  - Mental Health Disabilities – Depression, Bipolar
  - Brain Injury
- Acquired/Accidental Disabilities
  - Debilitating Diseases – MD, MS, Heart Disease
  - Heart Attack/Stroke
  - Spinal Cord Injuries

4

### Facilitator Notes:

Have some discussion about why these disabilities can't be found on Clip-Art or in pictures.

What do most people tend to think or picture in their mind when they think about people with disabilities (PWD).

Is that a problem? Have you or another person been treated differently because of a disability? What happened to you or someone you know?

As much as we would like to think that people have grown and understand disabilities better, there is still some fear of people with disabilities.

## We focus on the Ability in Dis-ability!

- **In Vocational Rehabilitation:**
  - We acknowledge people's disabilities and the barriers they present to training & employment.
  - Through self-assessment in this workshop, we are helping you look at your abilities & strengths and how to use those in the classroom & workplace.
  - We will also help you explore **accommodations** for your disabilities in the classroom & workplace.
- **Our long-term mutual goal is Employment!**

5

### **Facilitator Notes:**

- Stress that we are here to emphasize ABILITY! **Discuss accommodations.**
- Let's talk about some advantages and disadvantages to disclosing your disability:

#### Advantages of Disclosure

It allows you to receive reasonable accommodations so you can pursue work, school, or community activities more effectively.

It provides legal protection against discrimination (as specified in the Americans with Disabilities Act).

It reduces stress, since protecting a "secret" can take a lot of energy.

It gives you a clearer impression of what kinds of expectations people may have of you and your abilities.

It ensures that you are getting what you need in order to be successful.

It provides full freedom to examine and question health insurance and other benefits.

It provides greater freedom to communicate should you face changes in your particular situation.

It improves your self-image through self-advocacy.

It allows you to involve other professionals (for example, educators and employment service providers) in the learning of skills and the development of accommodations.

It increases your comfort level.

#### Disadvantages of Disclosure

It can cause you to relive bad past experiences that resulted in the loss of a job or negative responses from your peers.

It can lead to the experience of exclusion.

It can cause you to become the object of curiosity.

It can lead to your being blamed if something doesn't go right.

It can lead to your being treated differently than others.

It can bring up conflicting feelings about your self-image.

It can lead to your being viewed as needy, not self-sufficient, or unable to perform on par with peers.

It could cause you to be overlooked for a job, team, group, or organization.

Disclosing personal and sensitive information can be extremely difficult and embarrassing.

## People with Disabilities: Who are They?

- You may have wondered, “Am I the only person who struggles with a disability?”
- How many people have disabilities?
- Do they have successful careers?
- Let’s take a look at others with disabilities, some of whom you may know.

6

### **Facilitator Notes:**

At this point, we would like the participants to understand that there are many people who have disabilities. Some of them have gone on to become very successful. Disabilities affect so many people, and some of them you may be unaware of because you cannot see them (as we learned about in recent slides).

The following is a game for identifying people and what their disability may be. Directions are on the following page.

## Matching Name Game



7

**Facilitator Notes:**

**Projected Time: 10 mins.**

**Materials Needed:** Pictures of famous people are located in the PowerPoint presentation.

You will need to print the pictures as slides so that you can show the participants the picture and not the answer.

Directions: Have students match the sentence about the famous individual in the picture. Give everyone a chance to look at the pictures and decide together from the clues who the person is and what their disability is.

Facilitators will have the answers on the slides in the facilitator manual.

## Guess Who?



8

### **Facilitator Notes:**

#### **Howard Stern:**

He is a famous radio and TV personality. Stern was diagnosed with Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder. By practicing transcendental meditation and karate, he found that he can manage his disorder.



## Guess Who?



9

### **Facilitator Notes:**

#### **Dan Aykroyd:**

Famous comedian and actor: Dan Aykroyd was diagnosed with Tourette' Syndrome at an early age, but the symptoms seemed to have disappeared at around age 14. The diagnosis of Asperger's Syndrome did not exist in the 1960's when Aykroyd was a preteen.

## Guess Who?



10

### Facilitator Notes:

#### Tracey Gold (Born Tracey Claire Fisher):

She is an American actress best known for her role on the sitcom *Growing Pains*. She has a highly publicized battle with anorexia nervosa, which almost killed her. Tracey also experiences symptoms of dyslexia, which was especially noticeable during high school.

## Guess Who?



11

### Facilitator Notes:

#### Damon Wayans:

He is an American stand-up comedian, writer and actor who began his career as a stand up comic in 1982. He had a clubbed foot as a child. This attribute would also be given to his character in *My Wife and Kids*. His character on the cartoon series Waynehead for the WB *In Living Color*, was loosely based on his own childhood, growing up in a large family, starring a poor boy with a club foot.

## Guess Who?



12

### Facilitator Notes:

#### Howie Michael Mandel II:

He is a Canadian comedian, actor and game show host. He has been diagnosed with OCD (obsessive compulsive disorder) and ADHD (attention deficit hyperactive disorder). He does not shake hands with anyone due to mysophobia, the fear of dirt and germs. He also shaves his head because it helps him to feel cleaner. You may have seen him on *Deal or No Deal*.

## Guess Who?



13

### **Facilitator Notes:**

#### **Julia Roberts:**

She is one of the highest paid actresses in the world. Julia admitted that she stuttered when she was younger.

## Guess Who?



14

### Facilitator Notes:

#### Jessica Alba:

She is an American actress whose TV and film credits include *Dark Angel*, *Honey*, *Sin City*, *Fantastic Four*, and 2007's *Good Luck Chuck*. Jessica was marked by a multitude of physical maladies. She has experienced a collapsed lung (twice), repeated pneumonia, ruptured appendix, and cyst on her tonsils. She also admitted that she was diagnosed with Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder.

## Guess Who?



15

### **Facilitator Notes:**

#### **Leonardo DiCaprio:**

He is an actor who garnered world-wide fame for his role in the Titanic. He revealed that he was diagnosed with Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder; he has to force himself not to step on chewing gum stains when walking along and works on the urge to walk through a doorway several times, because he does not want his condition to take over his life.

## Guess Who?



16

### Facilitator Notes:

#### Harrison Ford:

He is best known for his performance in the *Star Wars* films and *Indiana Jones* movies. He experienced depression in his youth, and would sleep long hours, often missing class and having trouble keeping up with his studies.



## Guess Who?



17

### **Facilitator Notes:**

#### **Nelson Rockefeller:**

41<sup>st</sup> Vice President of the United States, Governor of New York, and businessman. Mr. Rockefeller had dyslexia.

## Guess Who?



18

### **Facilitator Notes:**

#### **Walt Disney:**

He did not do well in school and could not read until well past the fourth grade. The one thing he could do well was draw. How do you think that skill worked out for him?

## Guess Who?



19

### Facilitator Notes:

#### Chris Burke:

He was born with Down's Syndrome and his parents were told by medical staff and others that they should place him in an institution. Instead, he attended public school and eventually landed a role in a 1980's sitcom *Life Goes On*.

## Guess Who?



20

### Facilitator Notes:

**Marlee Beth Matlin** (born August 24, 1965):

She is an American actress. [Deaf](#) since she was 18 months old, she is the youngest woman to win the [Academy Award for Best Actress in a Leading Role](#), which she won at the age of 21 for [Children of a Lesser God](#). She has also stated she is a proud member of the [National Association of the Deaf](#).

## How About You?

- Can you find other individuals that had conditions which caused them to be labeled as “disabled”, but who are now successful and working with their strengths?
- How about you? Maybe you might just need an **accommodation**.

21

### Facilitator Notes:

#### Others:

Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) – polio,

F. W. Woolworth – labeled as “slow”,

General George Patten – deficient in reading,

Winston Churchill – difficulty in school,

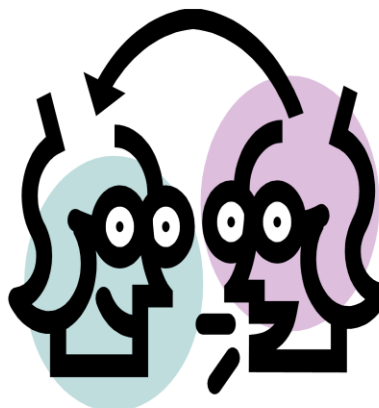
Albert Einstein – did not talk until 4, learned to read at 9, considered to be mentally slow, failed the entrance exam to college, and

Tom Cruise – dyslexia, learns lines by listening to tapes (auditory learner?).



## What is Disclosure?

- Disclosure means talking about your disability.
- Use informed choice to decide who you want to talk to about your disability.
- Choice is reflecting on and talking about your strengths and needs.



22

### Facilitator Notes:

- what we are talking about here is disclosing the nature or needs a person has, due to their disability, to an employer or future employer.

Youth are rarely taught about informed choice while in high school. (Many times adults do not even know until later in life that what they were dealing with was a disability – never mind how to discuss it.)

- Informed choice is the process for making a decision after considering relevant facts and weighing the pros and cons (positives and negatives) of the decision.
- Making informed choices is a skill that must be practiced, encouraged, reflected upon (think about it) and then practiced some more, in order to be acquired.
- Making informed choices requires you to collect information, maybe researching information for yourself or asking others for data.
- Informed decision-making is a skill from which you will benefit many times in your life when you are required to make crucial decisions.
- You may consider reviewing the 411 on Disability Disclosure Workbook at <http://www.ncwd-youth.info/411-on-disability-disclosure>

## When and Why to Disclose

- One of the most important decisions you will make as a person with a disability is whether or not to tell someone about your disability.
- Effective disclosure occurs when you are knowledgeable about your disability and are able to clearly describe both your disability-related needs and your skills and abilities.



23

### Facilitator Notes:

One of the most important decisions you will make as a person with a disability is whether or not to tell someone about your disability, especially an employer.

Effective disclosure occurs when you are knowledgeable about your disability and are able to clearly describe both your skills and abilities and your disability-related needs. It is important for you to focus on your skills, abilities, capabilities. What you can do for them if they hire you.

There are boundaries around disclosure – when should you tell them? (It is best to be honest, and let them get to know you as a worker with skills first.) Where should you talk about it? (In private.) Or why talk about it? (Because you need an accommodation, which we will get in to more detail shortly.)

However, there are many kinds of information that need to be kept confidential.

## Disclose for A Specific Purpose

- Some personal information such as your Social Security number, banking records or medical information are important to keep confidential.



24

### Facilitator Notes:

With all the electronic information we have today, it is important that we keep information like Social Security numbers secure due to the concern for Identity Theft.

Make sure they know the people they are providing this information to and there is a legitimate reason for having this information; in addition, it is important to know that they work for the organizations they say they are representing.

We need to all be careful about this.



## Remember -

- It is NOT essential to reveal specific personal information about your disability.
- Disclosure is only important if it affects your ability to perform work tasks successfully.



25

### Facilitator Notes:

If you have a disability, you must also consider the supports and services that you may need to be successful in a job or a post-secondary setting. Informed decision-making is critical. (Look at this wording – it is about needs – not about discussing the diagnosis. )

Learning to disclose your disability-related needs effectively and developing an accommodation plan is a valuable skill. Effective disclosure skills require you share information regarding your disability-related needs and creative practical suggestions for accommodations. Open communication with employers and professors/instructors can facilitate the process of evaluation, the effectiveness of the accommodation and changes when efforts are not working.

In academic settings, you will need to make decisions regarding: where to study, what to study, how to study, whether to attend full-time or part-time, whether to live at home or on campus, whether to commute or enroll on-line.

In employment settings, what is most important and helpful is to provide information about how your disability affects your ability to perform the essential functions of the job, what supports you need in order to provide a most favorable environment for your job or career, and your own accommodation ideas for your particular situation.

\*what is most important – to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of disclosure.

## **Provide Information About:**

- How your disability affects your capacity to learn and perform effectively.
- The environment, supports and services you will need in order to access, participate in, and excel in your job, studies and community.

You decide what and how much of this sensitive information is necessary to reveal in order to obtain the needed accommodations.

26

### **Facilitator Notes:**

It is very important to know how to best provide the accommodation that you need to get the work done. You really know what works best. With the help of specialized, trained professionals, you can discover what works best for you. (VR Counselors are trained and also get referrals from other specialized professionals regarding accommodations.)

What is important is that you know how your disability affects your capacity to learn and perform effectively.

Know what you need in the environment, what kind of supports and services you will need in order to access, participate in, and excel in your job, studies or the community.

You decide what and how much of this sensitive information is necessary to reveal in order to obtain the needed accommodations. It is about accommodation, not diagnosis.

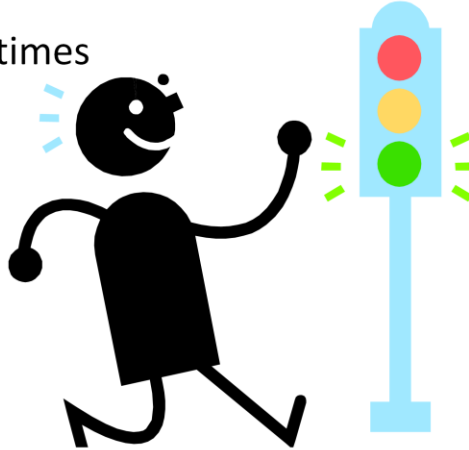
During an interview, remember to focus on your strengths and not your challenges.

By understanding your accommodations and being your own expert, you will minimize the employer's anxiety about being able to do the right thing, and he/she will be able to see that you are the best candidate for the job because of your SKILLS.



## Cross the Line

- Red equals No
- Yellow equals Sometimes
- Green equals Yes.



27

**Facilitator Notes:**

**Projected Time: 25 mins.** (very active game)

**Materials Needed:** Red, Yellow & Green tape; index cards and sticky dots in Red, Yellow and Green (there is a copy in the Participant Handbook and Activity Book.)

After each question is read, you are to “Cross the Line” or move to the line corresponding to the answer (Yes, No, Sometimes or Red, Yellow, Green). Once at the line, give them a sticker the same color as the line. At the end, they will count how many dots of each color they have to help determine what their needs are.

### **Review:**

**Yes** – if you answered yes to many of the questions, you should be proud of yourself! You definitely have a good sense of yourself and your disability. This means you are on the road to being a very self-determined individual. There is always room for improvement, and you can reflect on questions you answered ‘no’ to and create some short-term goals designed to strengthen your areas of limitations.

**Sometimes** – You possess some very good skills in understanding yourself and your disability, but you have some specific areas that need to be developed. Identify your strengths (green/yes), and list the ones you need to work on (No/reds). Create some short-term goals designed to strengthen your areas of limitations.

**No** – If many of the questions are No/Red, you are at the beginning stage of understanding yourself and your disability. Take steps to seek out others that you trust and you know well; ask them to help you sort out your areas of strengths and

needs (you probably have more strengths than you realize.) Develop some short-term goals designed to strengthen your areas of limitations.

# Accommodations

What is an accommodation?

- An accommodation is essentially any strategy that gets rid of or lessens the effect of a barrier to performing the job-related task.



28

## Facilitator Notes:

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE:

Understanding an accommodation will help participants to understand the rationale for accommodations and its connection with the rights & responsibilities of persons with disabilities.

## **Accommodations are NOT:**

- Accommodations are NOT intended to justify or compensate for a lack of knowledge, skills or abilities necessary to succeed.
- Accommodations are based on the need to perform a task and for further development of existing skills and capabilities.

29

### **Facilitator Notes:**

Accommodations are NOT intended to justify or compensate for a lack of knowledge, skills or abilities necessary to do the job or succeed at school.

Accommodations are based on the need to perform a task and for further development of existing skills and capabilities.

## Know Your Strengths

- It is very important to know your strengths and how these strengths will match the requirements of the job, school and/or community setting.
- To understand the requirements of the job or task at hand.
- Then, to understand if an accommodation will be needed to perform the job-related tasks.

30

### Facilitator Notes:

Learning and understanding your strengths has been a continuous focus of this workshop. We are beginning to talk about how the information the participants are gathering can be used to make informed decisions about finding and keeping a job.

**Employment** is the goal of Vocational Rehabilitation services and this workshop.

Knowing when to disclose the need for an accommodation is important for the job applicant. The job may or may not require an accommodation to perform the job-related tasks, and so they may not need to disclose their disability.

A VR Counselor can assist the participant to understand the individual's disability-related needs.

However, it is important for the participant to understand the requirements of the job so they will know whether they need an accommodation or not. Later, we will be looking at job descriptions so that you will know where to find that information and be able to make better informed decisions.

## Know Your Strengths (cont.)

- For example, if you struggle with math, you probably will want to avoid becoming a bookkeeper or an accountant.
- On the other hand, if a cash register tells you the amount of change you need to give and you are able to count money, then you might consider applying for a cashier position.

31

### Facilitator Notes:

This slide helps the participant to discern the variables of their strengths, abilities, capabilities, likes and dislikes. You could ask them if they can think of any other situations where this would occur.

Introduction to the next section:

There are different government regulations that guide the accommodation process by defining what a disability is, what a person's rights are under the regulations, and what is considered a reasonable accommodation.

We are going to be talking about the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 next.



## ADA Definition of Disability

A person qualifies as having a disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) if they have at least one of the following three conditions:

1. A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities (such as walking, talking, seeing, reading, learning, working);
2. A record of such impairment (for example, people with a history of cancer or mental illness); or
3. A perception by others as having an impairment (such as a person with a disfiguring facial scar or a person rumored to be HIV positive).

32

### Facilitator Notes:

Explain and discuss the definition and the three conditions.

## **ADA Prohibits Discrimination**

- **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** covers:
  - Private sector employment (Community Living Associates, Fraser Paper)
  - Activities of state and local governments (colleges, city offices, Career Centers)
  - Places of public accommodation (Stores, Malls, Movie Theaters, Restaurants)
  - Transportation (planes, trains, buses)
  - Telecommunication services (TTY)

33

### **Facilitator Notes:**

#### **LEARNING OBJECTIVE:**

The ADA not only defines what a disability is, it also designates rights and responsibilities for persons with disabilities. The ADA also takes into account how accommodating for a disability will affect a company. There are many facets to accommodation. It is not one sided but is there to work for the rights of people with disabilities.

You may need to briefly explain the history and purpose of ADA.

You may want to give examples of some private sector institutions in your area.

You probably should explain “TTY” and ask if anyone has used it.

## Section 504

- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a law designed to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities who participate in programs that receive Federal Financial assistance.
- The law requires these programs and services to be accessible to persons with disabilities.

34

### Facilitator Notes:

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires nondiscrimination by employers and organizations that receive federal funding assistance.

Public schools are required to provide “free appropriate public education” to each qualified student with a disability, including those not in “special education” programs.

However, colleges and universities have different requirements.

## Section 504 in schools

- According to the provisions of the ADA and Section 504, a plan is created that outlines the specific accommodations a student needs to have equal access to education.
- Each plan is designed around the specific needs of the individual.
- Colleges and Universities are also required to make reasonable accommodations under this law.

35

### Facilitator Notes:

When in public High School, a student is more likely to have people guiding them because K-12 is required to identify students with specific needs and provide equal access to education. However -

- When a student goes to work or college, they will need to be able to ask about getting accommodations. More of the responsibility will be on them to advocate for their rights.
  - Public K-12 schools are obliged to identify and evaluate students who may have disabilities; colleges and universities are not. All schools covered under Section 504 cannot legally require students to disclose any kind of disabilities past or present, including a history of mental illness, on college applications. Choosing to disclose a disability of any kind is up to the prospective student, and if a student opts not to do this, the college or university cannot make that determination on the student's behalf. Disclosure is only necessary when a student is requesting disability-based accommodations as described in a 504 plan or similar documentation.
- A Reasonable Accommodation**
- If a student discloses a disability and requests accommodation, the college may legally request documentation of the disability and the accommodations needed. Once the need for services is established, schools covered under Section 504 are obliged to make reasonable efforts to provide them. The 504 plan can assist the school's disability resource center to establish what services are needed to achieve parity with nondisabled students.

## Reasonable Accommodations

Accommodations could include:

- Changes to facilities and equipment (putting in ramps and parking spaces, making materials in large print, providing low/high-tech assistive technology);
- The provision of special services (such as sign language interpreters or qualified readers); and
- Creative thinking and problem solving!

36

### Facilitator Notes:

You could take the time to explain what a reasonable accommodation is:

What is a reasonable accommodation? The United States Department of Justice says that:

*"A reasonable accommodation is any modification or adjustment to a job or the work environment that will enable a qualified applicant or employee with a disability to participate in the application process or to perform essential job functions.*

*Reasonable accommodation also includes adjustments to assure that a qualified individual with a disability has rights and privileges in employment equal to those of employees without disabilities."* [USDOJ \(Department of Justice\)](#)

(There is another part to reasonable accommodation, and it has to do with the size of the company or school and their fiscal ability to provide the accommodation. )



## Bingo Game

We will be playing a Bingo Game around the topic of disability and disclosure.

37

**Facilitator Notes:**

**Projected Time: 25 mins.**

**Materials Needed:**

Bingo cards

Markers

Student glossary of terms (Participant Workbook)

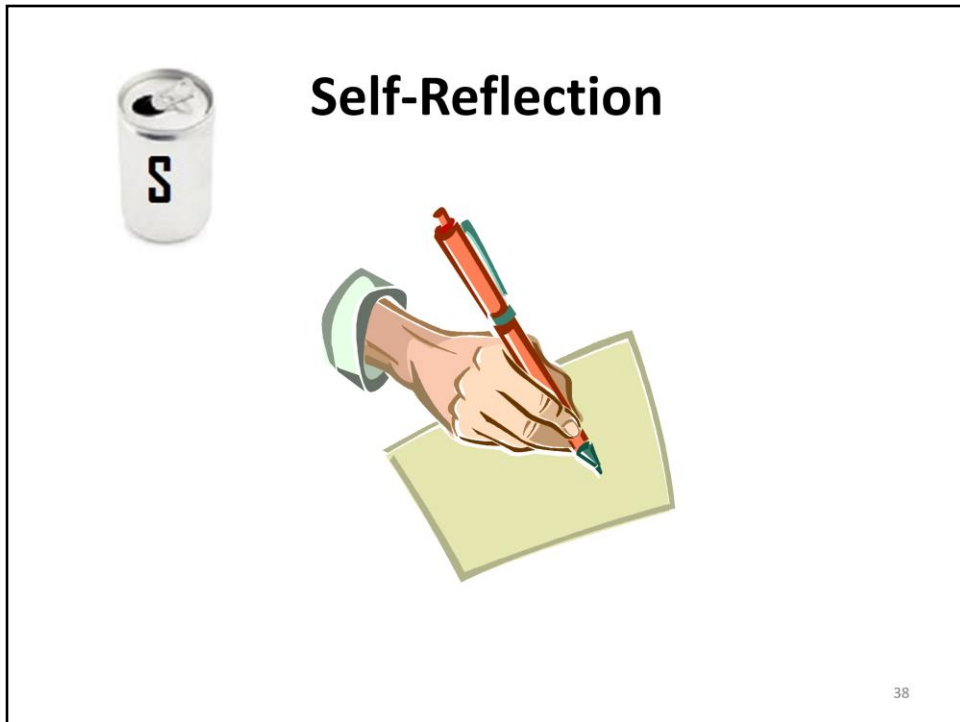
Prizes are optional

**In ADVANCE OF THIS ACTIVITY be sure to cut out your bingo cards as there are two per page.** (There is a copy in the Participant Workbook.)

**During the class:** Pass out Bingo Cards.

**Review** the list of Terms and Definitions located on the next page.  
Remember the goal is to learn the words.

This game is played after reviewing the vocabulary used for this curriculum. Provide each student with a BINGO card. Read a definition from the student glossary of terms. Students mark the vocabulary word on their cards. Ask the group what the answer was so students who may have been unsure will know. The goal of Bingo is for one player to complete a '**Bingo**' pattern, such as a line with five words in a vertical, horizontal or diagonal row on one of their cards.



**Facilitator Notes:**

**Projected Time: 15 minutes**

This will be an opportunity to document any reactions, learning, questions, etc. regarding this workshop so far. There is a Self Reflection Sheet in the Participant Handbook for them to document their thoughts. This activity could be used as a Dyad (of two) or Triad (of 3) for sharing with one another before moving onto the next phase, where we begin to look at occupations.

A copy of this sheet follows this slide.

Putting  together with 

- Let's make sure that we have documented everything that we have discovered about ourselves in our workbooks, so we can use this information to start thinking about - and planning - our future!



**Participant Workbook:** Review all of your entries on the "S" page of your packet.

39

#### Facilitator Notes:

**Materials Needed:** Participant Workbook

This is an opportunity to have the participants examine their Participant Workbook to make sure that they have documented everything that they have learned about themselves over the last few weeks. This would be a good time to have a discussion and check in with them.

Did you know all of this information about yourself when we started this workshop? Has this changed how you look at yourself? How about your temperament, your personality characteristics, your skills, and your prospects for employment?

The next section of the workshop begins to look at Occupations. They will learn how to research occupations, narrow down choices and find labor market information.